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Agenda item 110 (e)

Human rights questions: report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Report of the Third Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Hassan Kassem **Najem** (Lebanon)

I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Human rights questions: report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee held a substantive debate on the sub-item jointly with sub-items 110 (b) and (c) at its 33rd to 41st meetings, from 4 to 6 and on 9 and 10 November 1998, and took action on the item its 47th and 51st meetings, on 16 and 20 November. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/53/SR.33–41, 47 and 51).

3. For the documents before the Committee under this item, see A/53/625.

4. At the 33rd meeting, on 4 November, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/53/SR.33).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.45

5. At the 47th meeting, on 16 November, the representative of South Africa, on behalf of *Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria,* the *Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire,*

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in six parts, under the symbol A/53/625 and Add.1–5.

Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Monaco, Namibia, New Zealand, the *Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal,* the *Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine* and the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Question of resources for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the human rights activities of the United Nations" (A/C.3/53/L.45). Subsequently, *Argentina, Azerbaijan, Belize, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Mongolia, Morocco, Poland,* the *Republic of Moldova,* the *Russian Federation, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda,* the *United States of America, Venezuela* and *Zambia* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At the 51st meeting, on 20 November, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of the programme budget implications of the draft resolution.

7. At the same meeting, the representative of South Africa orally revised the draft resolution as follows:

(a) The phrase "without diverting resources from United Nations development programmes and activities" was added at the end of operative paragraph 1;

(b) Operative paragraph 2, which read:

"2. *Calls upon* competent intergovernmental bodies to take Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/83 and Economic and Social Council decision 1998/275 fully into account, in particular in the consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001",

was deleted and the subsequent paragraph was renumbered accordingly.

8. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.45, as orally revised, without a vote (see para.10).

9. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Pakistan and Algeria; after the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the United States of America, Senegal and Cuba (see A/C.3/53/SR.51).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

10. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Question of resources for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the human rights activities of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Recalling Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/83 of 24 April 1998[1] on the question of resources for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the human rights activities of the United Nations, in which the Commission

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 3* (E/1998/23), chap. II, sect. A.

expressed its concern that, with the resources currently available from the United Nations regular budget, the High Commissioner would not be in a position to fulfil the full range of established and new mandates, and therefore appealed to the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to take all necessary steps, without delay, to secure for the Office of the High Commissioner and other relevant components of the Organization regular budget resources for the current and future bienniums that would be sufficient to permit the effective fulfilment of the responsibilities and mandates established by Member States and commensurate with the importance assigned in the Charter of the United Nations to the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council decision 1998/275 of 30 July 1998, in which the Council, taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/83, approved the Commission's appeal to the Council, the Secretary-General and the General Assembly,

Taking note of other relevant resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly containing requests and proposals concerning the regular budget for the human rights programme,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps, without delay, to follow up Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/83 and Economic and Social Council decision 1998/275, in particular in the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, without diverting resources from United Nations development programmes and activities;

2. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this question at its fifty-fourth session under the item entitled "Human rights questions".